

VZCZCXYZ0008
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DE RUEHVI #0090 0221523
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 221523Z JAN 09
FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1893
INFO RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC
RUEHXQ/ALL EUROPEAN UNION POST COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS VIENNA 000090

SIPDIS, SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ENRG](#) [EPET](#) [AU](#) [ZJ](#)
SUBJECT: Austria Allays Concerns on Caspian Development
Corporation

REF: (A) STATE 2532; (B) 08 VIENNA 1883

11. (SBU) Post delivered ref A points on the Caspian Development Corporation (CDC) to the Energy International Affairs Department head in the Austrian Economic Ministry, Dr. Maria Reich-Rohrwig. GOA rep said the Ministry agrees that the CDC should not hamper private sector activities in the energy business. The CDC is "absolutely not" intended to substitute for commercial activity, nor will it treat state-owned or EU companies on a preferential basis, she emphasized.

12. (SBU) Reich-Rohrwig cited an initiative by Austrian OMV and German RWE as a model project "in the spirit" of the CDC. OMV and RWE started a joint venture in December 2008 to explore possibilities for a natural gas pipeline across the Caspian Sea (ref B). According to GOA rep, OMV and RWE will invite all interested companies -- including those outside the EU -- to participate in building and operating gas transport systems across the Caspian Sea.

KILNER